The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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MY TRIUMPH.

The autumn time has come;
On woods that dream of bloom,
And over purpling vines,
The low sun fainter shines.

The aster flower is failing,
The hazel's gold is paling;
Yet overhead more near
The eternal stars appear!

And present gratitude
Insures the future's good,
And for the things I see
I trust the things to be;

That in the paths untrod,
And the long days of God,
My feet shall still be led,
My heart be comforted.

O living friends who love me
O dear ones gone above me!
Careless of other fame,
I leave to you my name.

Hide it from idle praises,
Save it from evil phrases;
Why, when dear lips that spake it
Are dumb, should strangers wake it?

Let the thick curtain fall;
I better know than all
How little I have gained,
How vast the unattained.

Not by the page word-painted
Let life be banned or sainted:
Deeper than written scroll
The colors of the soul.

Sweeter than any sung
My songs that found no tongue;
Nobler than any fact
My wish that failed of act.

Others shall sing the song,
Others shall right the wrong,—
Finish what I begin,
And all I fail of win.

What matter, I or they?
Mine or another's day,
So the right word be said
And life the sweeter made?

Hail to the coming singers!
Hail to the brave light-bringers!
Forward I reach, and share
All that they sing and dare.

The airs of heaven blow o'er me;
A glory shines before me
Of what mankind shall be,—
Pure, generous, brave, and free.

A dream of man and woman
Diviner, but still human,
Solving the riddle old,
Shaping the Age of Gold!

The love of God and neighbor;
An equal-handed labor;
The richer life, where beauty
Walks hand in hand with duty.

Ring, bells in unreared steeples,
The joy of unborn peoples!
Sound, trumpets far off blown,
Your triumph is my own!

Parcel and part of all,
I keep the festival,
Fore-reach the good to be,
And share the victory.

I feel the earth move sunward,
I join the great march onward,
And take, by faith, while living
My freehold of thanksgiving.

—*John Greenleaf Whittier.*

THE UNSPEAKABLE GIFT.

"Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift." 2 Cor. ix. 16.

What a wonderful world is this into which we have been born! Life is a little day; but how it is filled with opportunity for knowledge, for work, for love! It has room in it for the sublime voices of prophets, bards, leaders, reformers, saints, and martyrs. It has room for the happy homes of those whose sober wishes do not learn to stray from the cool sequestered vale of familiar affections. It has room for dear little children, innocent infants, with an aureole of divine light around them. It has room for generosity, patience, hope, and self-denying love. It has room for pain borne without repining, for bereavement sustained by faith, for a death made sweet by an infinite hope. It has room for love of wife and husband, for the tenderness of the parent and the piety of the child. It has joys and work and duties for youth, manhood, and age. These gifts are evident: they are new every morning. God opens his hand, and supplies the wants of every living thing. He is the perpetual Giver. His joy is in never-ceasing creation. The fountain of his love pours forth new supplies each moment. If his gifts are perpetually passing away, it is that they may be forever renewed. If it is more blessed for man to give than to receive, this is the blessedness of God, that he has not made a world go on by itself, but renews it every hour by perpetual creative bounty.

And what a wonderful gift is the human soul! What mysterious powers are hidden therein, slowly evolved into grand activities, And yet that this personal unit, so limited and confined, should be able to unite itself in thought with past and present, with the universe of space and time; should be able to reach out to the stars, weigh and measure the planets; should be able to recall the history of the earth and unroll its geological record; should be able to analyze substances burning in the furnaces of suns and stars; able to send by lightning its messages under the ocean and over the continent; able to enter with sympathetic thought into the mind of Homer, Dante, and Milton; able to know Christ and love him; able to live a life of communion with eternal right and infinite good,—this is the most marvellous fact of all, and for all this we may well thank God every day and every hour.

But why should we praise God? He does not need words of praise. He cannot love praise as men desire it. Even a good man does not desire to be praised for his goodness: he prefers to do his good works unknown of men, as Jesus recommends. He does not let his left hand know what his right hand does. How, then, can God desire the praise of his creatures?

To this many would answer: "He wishes our praise not for his own sake, but only for ours. It does us good to be grateful. Gratitude enlarges the heart: ingratitude hardens it. Therefore, God asks for our gratitude and worship, our adoration and thanksgiving, because it makes us better to render it."

This is true as far as it goes, but only half the truth. To thank God when we know that he does not desire our thanks, and takes no pleasure in them except for our good, would be a barren offering, and almost unnecessary. There is a sense in which God may enjoy the thanks of his creatures. If those thankgsivings of ours spring not from the mind only, but the heart also, if they come from love, then even the infinite majesty of heaven may find joy in the grateful heart of creation. For love unites the high and the low. Pure love is never wasted, it never fails: it is greater than faith and hope. It is the essential thing in prayer: it is that which makes obedience twice blessed. Who can ever despise or be indifferent to sincere love? It is the greatest gift of God to men, the only return men can make to God.

This, then, is "the unspeakable gift," the gift which makes the value of all other gifts. We do not value a gift from man unless we see in it some love. How can we be grate-

ful for anything given only with the hand, and not with the heart, given from a mere sense of duty, given by rule or custom or law? You could not be very grateful to a man even for saving your life if he did it thinking only of his own glory or as a mere function of his business, "perfunctorily," as we say. No! unless a man puts some heart into his gift, he has no right to ask for gratitude. We complain that men are not grateful for our benevolence. Are *you* grateful for anything done for you by those who do not love you, who help you merely out of self-respect or to retain the respect of others? No! There must be some element of love in a gift to make it of any value.

Real ingratitude then, the fatal ingratitude, comes from those who are unable or unwilling to recognize love in a giver. He who believes that men are only selfish, he who attributes selfish motives to all human acts, has made himself incapable of gratitude. He who reasons thus in order to justify his own selfishness cannot be grateful. No matter how generously he may be treated, he does not see the generosity: he invents some personal motive to account for it. The generous man looks for generosity, the selfish man expects selfishness, and each finds what he looks for.

The "unspeakable gift," therefore, which gives value to God's other gifts, is the love which is in them. It is "unspeakable"; for who can describe even human love, much less infinite love? But what we cannot describe we can see and know. Who can describe the perfume of a violet? Yet we know it, and know its difference from the odor of mignonette or that of a rose. Who can describe the melody in the song of a nightingale or the music of a gentle voice? But we know these, and can recall them after long years. So we may know, though we cannot describe, this unspeakable gift of Divine Love.

Men may receive all God's other gifts; and, if no love is seen in them, they will awaken no gratitude. A man of taste may be gratified, but hardly grateful, in the sight of outward beauty. It may please his ideality and imagination, but leave his heart cold. The sight of vast laws may gratify our desire for knowledge. A man may do right simply because it is right, and will find satisfaction in so doing. But the "unspeakable gift" may not be in any of these blessings.

It is not till we see love in God's gifts that we are grateful; and, when we see love, we cannot help being grateful.

But is not this the wonder of wonders, the most inexplicable and unspeakable fact, that the Infinite Being, the Being of beings, the great order of the universe, the profound substance beneath all existence, he who is above the reach of reason, imagination, philosophy, should not be above the reach of love? We see power everywhere, wisdom everywhere, benevolent adaptations everywhere; but, before the personal Being, the great heart of the universe, there hangs an impenetrable veil. To the intellect this mystery is unfathomable. But there was one human soul able to draw aside that veil, one who from the first spoke of God as Father. The inspired heart of Jesus went to a depth far below that of the philosophic reason. It came near to the heart of God. And so he was a revelation, never before made, of the Father. Therefore, he who has seen him has seen the Father. No one comes to the Father but by him. We can come to the Infinite Being by the broad highway of reason. Plato shows us the divine element in all human nature. Spinoza shows us a divine substance beneath all phenomena. Science, star-eyed, brings us to-day no doctrine of despair, but announces power above law, behind force, supremely divine. But who except Jesus has revealed the deeper mystery of divine love? To him alone it was given to show to mankind that within all other gifts is this "unspeakable gift" of love. There have, indeed, been mystics in all religions who have sought by ascetic practices, by solitary prayer, by monastic self-denial, to purify themselves so as to meet God in their soul. But Jesus brings God's love to all,—not to the thinker or the monk or the anchorite only, but to the humblest child of the Infinite Friend. The sailor on the high and giddy mast can feel beneath him the everlasting arms. The young soldier, dying in pain on the battle-field, can say, "My Father," and be at peace. The sinner in the midst of temptation can utter in his heart a cry for help, and be pardoned and saved. The little child can talk with this

dear Father, and its childish prattle will reach the infinite ear.

This is the key to the ardent language of Paul. This is why he forever repeats the name of Christ. This is why he says we are rooted and grounded in love. To Paul there came from Jesus this divine revelation of a great Father-head; and it broke the bonds of his Pharisaic literalism, of his routine religion, took him out of his ritual ceremonies, texts of Scripture, into a new life of perfect trust and hope and joy. "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." "The life I now live I live by faith in the Son of God." "I live, but not I: Christ lives in me." Christ to him was the manifestation of a divine tenderness, of which he had never before dreamed. So that, no matter what happened to him, he was sitting in heavenly places with Jesus,—persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.

And this unspeakable gift was not given to Jesus alone or to Paul alone, but is given to you and to me. To us the word of this salvation is also sent. Salvation! for what can be more safe than to feel ourselves in the embrace of an infinite love? Salvation! for we know that our sins will be destroyed and our evil cleansed by coming into this heavenly atmosphere of love. Salvation! for how can we continue to sin if we are kept in the presence of our Father?

Draw near, then, in faith, to this great, overflowing fountain of heavenly compassion. God has put into our hearts his spirit, to enable us all to say, "Our Father!" Let nothing separate us from his love,—neither life nor death, nor our own folly and sin, our own weakness and ignorance, our own doubt or unbelief. Let us not be troubled by harsh doctrines. God asks for none of these things at our hands. Sacrifice and offering he does not require,—not the sacrifice of our own reason before unintelligible mysteries. He says only this, "My son, give me thy heart!" And, to enable us to do so, he shows his own love to every soul that he has made,—shows how he leaves the ninety-and-nine in the wilderness, and goes after the one sheep that is lost; how he so loved the world as to give the only one who had risen to the height of perfect sonship—his only Son—to bring the same sense of a Father's love to the rest of his children. He allowed this dearest child to die in torture and shame that we, by that solemn sacrifice, might be lifted out of darkness into marvellous light. So now we can behold in all his gifts this unspeakable gift of a fatherly love. Now every outward blessing has in it a touch of divine tenderness. Now we see in the universe not only beauty and wonder, power, order, law, but, interfused and penetrating all things, that highest of all created beings, a Divine Love. Hold fast to it! let it not go, for it is your life! To trust in the Father's love is the gospel within the gospel. It is the inmost secret of Christ: it is the way, the truth, and the life.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

THE BIBLE CLASS.

THE DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST AND ITS EFFECT ON THE WORK OF JESUS.

Let us once more call attention to the intensely interesting quality which the four Gospels acquire when read in the light of history and studied as a whole, the bearing of each event on succeeding events being appreciated. If the habit prevails of reading piecemeal a few verses or a chapter at a time, the whole meaning of the story is not perceived.

Jesus, chosen by God to be the religious teacher and leader of the race, worked under human conditions; and, to understand his life and his work, we must understand historical antecedents, contemporary history, national traits, and the political elements of the situation.

Up to this period (about the time of sending out the apostles), with full consciousness of all that was at stake, with a perfect understanding of the conditions, with the knowledge of all that success in his object would bring to the world, and the long centuries of suffering and evil which his failure would cause, he had met with disappointment after disappointment. A heavier blow was now to fall, one that would apparently put an end at once to all possibility of accomplishing the end for which he lived,—that of giving a higher and purer religion, a better knowledge of God, to the human race.

To the priests at Jerusalem he had naturally made his first appeal. In communication and in friendly relations with the con-

quering Romans, had they been willing to accept the generous and liberal ideas of religion which Jesus desired to promulgate, all would have gone well.* He failed, and this was the first disappointment. Had he appeared "standing on the pinnacle of the temple," he would have been accepted without a question.

Having given in vain the object lesson in Jerusalem by driving out the money-changers who had there usurped the only place open to the Gentiles, † he turned to his native Galilee. Preaching in Nazareth, his sermon led to a heated discussion, and the final illustrations from the stories of Naaman the Syrian and the widow of Sidon, which made so unanswerable an argument that the attempt upon his life was the natural result.

So far from losing courage, Jesus went to Capernaum, and immediately chose a custom-house officer in the employ of the Romans as one of his apostles.

It must be borne in mind that the point at issue was the admitting of the Gentiles to the Jewish church on equal terms with the Jews, not as then on a lower step, and never allowed to share in the temple worship. The *exclusiveness* of the Jews, and their bitter, resentful spirit toward their Roman conquerors, were the two great obstacles which it was necessary to overcome.

The first visit to Jerusalem seems to have been peaceful enough. The conversation with Nicodemus implies a previous discussion, of which this was the continuation. At the second visit the Jews "persecute" Jesus. With the third they threaten his life.

The Pharisees, at first in friendly relations with Jesus, became gradually alienated by his disregard of their petty and formal regulations. Jesus seems to have expected help from them, and to have felt keen disappointment at the failure of this hope. It should be remembered that they were the *liberal* party. But, unfortunately, their bitterness toward the Romans was extreme.

He had failed with the priests and the Sanhedrim: he had failed with the Pharisees. He turned to the common people. They "heard him gladly," and he still hoped.

He preached the "Sermon on the Mount." He urged on his hearers the duty, the necessity, of perfect, *absolute* forgiveness; for he saw that all depended on that. On his part he never lost an opportunity of showing a kindness to a foreigner. (See the healing of the "centurion's servant," the "nobleman's son," the talk with the Samaritan woman.) The people loved him, but the leaders hated him. "The Pharisees went out, and straightway with the Herodians took counsel against him, how they might destroy him."* (Mark iii. 6.)

With the leaders of the two great parties united against him, his position became very critical; and his life was in danger. Conscious of this, he prepared his disciples to carry on his work in case of his death.

But now fell another blow, and the harm done was irretrievable. A fatal check was inevitable, and Jesus himself saw no way out of this difficulty. The *death of John the Baptist*, who had been the great popular leader, enraged and excited the people against Herod Antipas, against the Romans, and destroyed all hope of a *peaceful* religious reform. No use now to preach forgiveness. Knowing that the people would seek him out and endeavor to persuade him to become their leader, and set him up as a rival to Herod Antipas, he retired to a lonely place on the other side of the lake, hoping to escape the multitude and to have time for reflection. (John vi. 15; Matt. xiv. 13; Mark vi. 31.)

Jesus went by boat, taking with him only some of his disciples, and hoping thus to escape the multitudes. But, perceiving the direction taken by the boat, the people went thither on foot, so that, when Jesus arrived, numbers were already there before him, awaiting him.† Much as he craved solitude, great as was his need of rest, thought, and prayer, he had not the heart to send them away. The words that he spoke are not recorded; but he may have thought that this was one of the few last remaining op-

*Students should here read the account of these visits to Jerusalem in John ii. and iii., John v., and John vii. It must be remembered that John vi. is out of place.

† See lesson in *Cheerful Letter*, May, 1895.

*See lessons on Sabbath controversy, July and August *Cheerful Letter*, 1895.

† Edersheim thinks that the near approach of the passover partly accounts for so large a number having collected. Many would take the route through Perea, passing around the head of the lake.

portunities for speaking to them. Mark says "he had compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things." The thought in his mind was probably: "This may be the last time. Soon they will be grieving for me, as now for John. And what will become of them when I am gone?" Although he had left Capernaum on purpose to obtain much needed solitude, he looked into the eager, waiting faces, and he could not bear to bid them go.

His disciples, however, watched over him anxiously; and by and by they came to him, and said, "The place is desert, and the day is now far spent. Send them away, that they may go into the country and villages round about, and buy themselves somewhat to eat."

But the tender heart of Jesus still yearned over his sheep. They had been standing long, and crowding about him to hear his words. He would not send them away weary and hungry. They should have one more precious memory, an hour of rest and peace and love to recall during the bitter days he saw approaching. He would bless the bread for them, as for his near disciples.

So he ordered the apostles to arrange the people in rows, and divide them into fifties and hundreds, and let them sit "upon the green grass." He took the five loaves and two fishes which his disciples brought him, and, "looking up to heaven, he blessed and brake the loaves." Likewise he "divided" the fishes. And everybody ate and rested, and there was enough for all.

The graphic and picturesque story in Mark does not seem to me to imply a "*miraculous*" multiplication of the loaves. Had the story had some one else as a central figure, no explanation would have been needed other than the fact that the travellers were provided with food for the passover journey. It is, however, usually classed among the "miracles" of Jesus; and we are fortunate in having an account in all four Gospels. (See Matt. xiv.; Mark vi.; Luke ix.; John vi.)

Edersheim thinks the place easy to identify. He says: "It was a well-known spot where Jesus and his apostles touched the shore. Not many miles south of it was the Gerasa, or Gergesa, where the great miracle of healing the demonized had been wrought. Just beyond Gerasa the mountains and hills recede, and the plain along the shore enlarges till it attains wide proportions on the northern bank of the lake. The few ruins which mark the site of Bethsaida-Julias—most of the basalt stones having been removed for building purposes—lie on the edge of a hill, three or four miles north of the lake. The ford, by which those who come from Capernaum crossed the Jordan, was, no doubt, that still used, about two miles from where the river enters the lake. About a mile further on that wide expanse of grass would be the scene of the great miracle. In short, the locality thoroughly accords with the requirements of the gospel narrative." (Edersheim, "Life and Times," vol. i. p. 678.)

There is an interesting point in connection with the mention of the barley loaves and fishes. In the Gospel of John there is a peculiar word used here for "fish,"—"opsarion." This refers to a particular kind of small fish, usually eaten salted or pickled, with bread, as a relish, like the herrings of Holland or Germany, or a peculiar kind of small fish eaten in the north of Scotland. Here we have, therefore, one of the unconscious touches which show the accuracy and genuineness of the Fourth Gospel, just as the mention *by name* of the fishes eaten in Scotland would show such minute knowledge of the habits of the north-east of Scotland as only personal residence could give. (Edersheim.)* L. F. C.

Readers are invited to send questions in connection with New Testament study. Address Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

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* "The Talmud declares that, of all kinds of meat, fish only becomes more savory by salting, and names certain kinds specially designated as '*small fishes*' which might be eaten without being cooked. Small fishes were recommended for health; and a kind of pickle or savory was also made of them. Now, the Lake of Galilee was particularly rich in these fishes; and we know that both the salting and pickling of them was a special industry among its fishermen. For this purpose a small kind of them were specially selected, which bear the name *Terith*. Now, the diminutive used by Saint John, of which our authorized version no doubt gives the meaning fairly by rendering it 'small fishes,' refers, no doubt, to those small fishes (probably a kind of sardine), of which millions were caught in the lake, and which, dried and salted, would form the most common 'savory,' with bread, for the fisher-population along its shores." (Edersheim.)

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all matter for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.*]

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Educational.

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Thèmes Grecs"; "The Classic French Reader"; "Abrégé de la Grammaire Française," Noel et Chapsal; Chardenal's "Second French Course"; "Dramatic French Reader"; "Récits d'Histoire de France"; "French Exercises in Composition"; "Materials for French Composition"; "La Lexicologie des Ecoles"; "Fables de La Fontaine"; "Exercises sur la Nouvelle Grammaire Française"; "Histiore d'un Conscrit de 1813," Erckmann-Chatrian; "Petite Grammaire Française"; Blouet's "Class Book of French Composition"; "Abecedaire Français-Anglais," illustré; Borel's "Grammaire Française"; "Handbook of German Literature," Adler; Whitney's "German Grammar"; Sheldon's "Short German Grammar"; "Second Year Lesebuch"; "Elementarbuch des Gesprochenen Englisch," H. Sweet; "Robert Leichtfuss," Hans Hopfen; "Der Hüttenbesitzer," I. Linden; "Sprechen Sie Deutsch?" or "Do you speak German"; "German Exercises," Stein; "Elements of German Syntax"; "Complete Course of Instruction in the German Language"; "Elements of German Grammar," Krauss; "Der Alte und der Neue Glaube an Christus," Schwalb; Andrews's "Viri Romae"; "Select Orations of Lysias"; "Latin Lessons, adapted to Allen and Greenough's Latin Grammar"; "First Part of Latin Reader," Andrews; "Quintus Curtius"; "Latin Lessons," Leighton; "Primary Number Lessons," Ginn; French's "Common School Arithmetic"; "Elements of Geometry and Trigonometry," Legendre; Greenleaf's "Primary Arithmetic"; Colburn's "Intellectual Arithmetic"; "The National Arithmetic," Greenleaf; Robinson's "Shorter Course in Arithmetic"; Walton's "Practical Arithmetic"; Hagar's "Elementary Arithmetic"; Walton's "Written Arithmetic"; "The Franklin Written Arithmetic"; Swinton's "Condensed United States History"; "History of Mexico," Bancroft; Parley's "Universal History"; Rick's "Natural History Object Lessons"; "Our World, or First Lessons in Geography," M. L. Hall; Worcester's "Geography."

Miscellaneous.

"Poems," David Barker; "Allegories of Life," Mrs. J. S. Adams; "King Richard III.," "King Henry VIII.," Shakspere; "America Illustrated," J. D. Williams; "The Poetry of Germany translated into English Verse"; "Dombey and Son," Dickens; "Little Journey in the World," C. D. Warner; "Doings of the Bodley Family"; "Scenes of Clerical Life," George Eliot; Emerson's "Essays"; Carlyle's "Life of Sterling"; Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World"; Froude's "Two Chiefs of Dunboy"; "Aurora Leigh," E. B. Browning; Macqueary's "Topics of the Times"; "All Sorts and Conditions of Men"; "John Halifax, Gentleman."

The Philadelphia Branch (address Miss Helen B. Goodwin, 2036 Gratz Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) offers "Miss Nobody from Nowhere"; "My Lady Nicotine," Barrie; "Plain Tales from the Hills," Kipling; "Short Stories," Frank Stockton; "Three and One makes Four," W. Stead; the *Housekeeper*, 1895; *Unity*, 1894, 1893; *Unitarian*, 1888–1895; "Mr. Maidnent," Julian Sturgis; "A Dreamer of Dreams"; "The Scudamores"; *Phrenological Journal;* "A Thoughtless Yes," Helen Gardner; "Happinolande, and Other Stories," O. B. Bunce; "A Book of Sybils"; "A Little Pilgrim," Mrs. Oliphant; "Life of Cromwell"; "Essays," by George Eliot; "One Reason Why"; "One Woman's Way," Pendleton; "The Pariah," Anstey; "Phineas Finn," Trollope; "John Bowerbank's Wife," Mulock; "Medusa," Mrs. A. R. Sartoris; Life of Charles Reade; Life of Madame Rémusat.

Miss J. E. Stone, 5 Prescott Street, Clinton, Mass., offers "Carita," Mrs. Oliphant; "Matrimony," W. E. Norris; Carlyle's "Essays"; "Derrick Vaughan," E. Lyall; "Allan's Wife," "The World's Desire," Haggard; "The Dean's Daughter," Veitch; "Daniel Deronda," G. Eliot; "Marquis of Lossie," G. MacDonald; "Bound by a Spell," Hugh Conway; "Hazard of New Fortunes," Howells; "Our Bessie," R. Carey; "Almost a Duchess"; "Frankenstein," M. W. Shelley; "The Rogue," Norris; "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," R. L. Stevenson; "Master Humphrey's Clock," Dickens; "All's Dross but Love," Lamarter; "On Trust," Thomas Cobb; "A Scandal in Bohemia," Conan Doyle; "A Maine Girl," Edwin Cooledge; "Flower and Weed," M. E. Braddon; "Hickory Hall," E. D. E. N. Southworth; "Nurse Revel's Mistake,"

F. Warden; "Study in Scarlet," Conan Doyle; "Old Fulkerson's Clerk," Walworth; "In Silk Attire," "Three Feathers," Black; "From Traditional to Rational Faith," R. A. Griffin; "Letter and Spirit," Richard Metcalf; "Ancient History," W. Smith; "History of the United States," Higginson; Wentworth's "Arithmetical Problems"; Sargent's "Fourth Reader"; Loomis's "Geometry"; Loomis's "Astronomy"; Hart's "Rhetoric"; Worcester's "Ancient and Modern History."

The Women's Alliance of the First Church, Salem, offers the following books. Address Mrs. A. R. Millett, 12½ Hathorne Street, Salem, Mass. Colburn's "Arithmetic and its Complications"; Fowler's "English Grammar"; Greenleaf's "Algebra"; "Natural Philosophy," Johnston; "Astronomy," Mattison; Youmans's "Chemistry"; "Natural Philosophy," Parker; "Natural Philosophy," Peck; *Harper's Bazar*, 1894; "Book of Universalist Sermons," Silloway; "Elements of Agricultural Chemistry and Geology," Johnston; "Latin Grammar," Allen; "Life and Labors of Dr. Judson," Conant; "Scott and Jackson," Headley; "Key to Greenleaf's Arithmetic," 1848; "System of Phrenology," Combe; "History of South Boston"; Anthon's "Tacitus"; "Chemistry," Johnston; "Constitutional Text Book: A Practical Exposition of the Constitution of the United States"; "Fables" (in Greek).

Song Books.

"The Guiding Star," "Nine O'clock in the Morning," "Gospel Hymns, No. 2," "Prayer-meeting Hymns and Tunes," "The Handel Collection of Church Music," sheet music, vocal and instrumental.

Mrs. W. M. Brundage, 634 Madison Avenue, Albany, New York, offers back numbers of the *Ladies' Home Journal.*

(It is well to state to what year the numbers belong.)

Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass., offers "Homes in Heaven and on Earth" (leaflet sermon by James Freeman Clarke); "Shirley," Charlotte Bronté; "Anti-slavery Days," James Freeman Clarke; "A Little Pilgrim" and "Old Lady Mary," Oliphant; "A Book of Sybils," Miss Thackeray; "Stray Pearls," Miss Yonge.

REQUESTS.

READ DIRECTIONS AT BEGINNING OF BOOK CLUB BEFORE WRITING.

We are sorry to state that our Book Club secretary, Mrs. Hallett, has been obliged to give up the work for the next few months. Until farther notice requests (as well as offers) may be sent to MRS. W. B. NICHOLS, 3 WEBSTER STREET, ALLSTON, MASS., *who has kindly taken Mrs. Hallett's place for the summer.*

Libraries.

Standing requests for libraries from:—

Rev. George H. Taylor, Rocky Ford, Colorado;

Mrs. O. A. Langston, Sidney, Comanche County, Texas;

Mrs. C. S. Stowell, Magnolia, Boulder County, Colorado;

Mr. Davis M'Carn, Anamosa, Iowa;

Mrs. D. Jayne, Cayuta, Schuyler County, New York;

Mrs. Emma Miner, Lisbon, New Hampshire;

Stephen D. Rhoden, La Pine, Crenshaw County, Alabama;

Mrs. Isadore E. Rice, Oakland, Oregon.

Mrs. Stowell, Mrs. Jayne, and Mrs. Miner all need children's books, Mrs. Stowell also asks for books for a mining population (many are educated people). Mr. Graves asks for a Sunday-school and parish library, Mr. Rhoden for an industrial school for colored children.

(If any address is omitted that should be in this list of standing requests, we shall be glad to insert it in the next number.)

Books for the Anamosa Church Library, formerly sent to Rev. Charles Graves, may now be sent to Mr. Davis M'Carn, Anamosa, Iowa.

The Sidney Library is the Bibb Library, moved three miles to a somewhat better situation.

Mrs. Rice teaches in a Sunday-school in a lonely region where there is no library, and would be glad to have books interesting to boys.

Mrs. Elizabeth T. Horton, Martinez, California, would like the *New England Magazine.* (Mrs. Horton will remit postage.)

Mrs. J. L. Bergh, Cobleskill, New York, would like an interesting magazine sent her regularly.

Mrs. J. L. Cohoon, Penn Yan, Yates County, New York, asks for "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

Mrs. M. M. Butler, Childress, Tennessee, will be grateful for any reading matter. History of the United States especially desired.

Dr. W. F. James, Velasco, Texas, would like the *Illustrated American*.

Miss Hannah Cox, Excelsior Springs, Clay County, Missouri, a cripple since childhood, would be glad of reading.

Davis S. Porter, Parkerville, Worth County, Georgia, asks for *Youth's Companion*.

Will some one who can send the *Arena*, if possible as it comes out, or numbers for the past year, write for address to Miss Dresel, 328 Beacon Street, Boston. (January, May, and August, 1894, have been sent.)

Will some one send me the *Atlantic Monthly* each month after reading, or the *Ladies' Home Journal?* Address Miss Mary H. Pittenger, Art, Clay County, Indiana.

Mrs. Emma M. Backus, High Point, Guilford County, North Carolina, would like the *Arena*, *New England*, or *McClure's* magazines, and the *words*, not the music, of the song "Hurrah for Old New England."

Mrs. Jennie F. Jones, Martinez, California, asks for reading matter of any kind.

I have had some reading from *The Cheerful Letter* people, which is a great comfort to me. I am alone sometimes many hours at a time; and, when I am not able to work, it is a great comfort to have a good book. I have had some reading from people in town. But, being so long a time shut in, one reads a great many through; and I am always wanting more. Books have been my best and truest friends in the years of my suffering and sorrows. Yours, I. H. N., Mrs. J. L. Bergh.

Will some kind friend be so good as to send me any of the following books? "Harold, the Last of the Saxons," by Bulwer; "Uncle Tom's Cabin," Stowe; "The Spanish Gypsy," Eliot; "The Manxman," Hall Caine; "A Window in Thrums," Barrie; "Pendennis," Thackeray. Mrs. Louise H. Goodwin, Allwood, Amherst County, Virginia. I am grateful for the many magazines and newspapers sent with no name attached.

Dear Cheerful Letter Friends,—I want to tell you how my loan library succeeded. I inserted a notice in the paper published here that I would lend any of my books and magazines, and there are several who come to me regularly for reading. My books are scattered all the time. They have done me so much good, and now I am so glad to have them to lend to others. I should like to have more such books as "Life and Times of Jesus," "Stepping Heavenward," and "A Little Pilgrim." This last book makes heaven seem so real and near. Although the author knows no more about it than the rest of us, yet she has pictured it so pleasant and natural that it is a pleasure to think of it in the way she has written. I always had such vague, indistinct ideas of heaven. I never thought of it being in any way like this world. But since reading that book, I can think of it as a homelike place, and I can imagine my friends enjoying themselves and waiting for their loved ones. I cannot grieve for those who are gone. They are so much better off than we are, and it seems like such a short time we have to stay here.

I heard something the other day that seems to me would be so comforting for a mother to think of, who has lost a child. I was visiting at a house where their first child had been taken, and the mother was telling me how she grieved about it so much till one day she seemed to hear a voice saying to her, "You ought to be so happy to think you are the mother of an angel." She said this comforted her so much that she never grieved for her child afterwards.

When we know our friends are safe, ought we not rather to rejoice than mourn? Mrs. Carrie Smith, East Peru, Iowa.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

AN AUTUMN THOUGHT FOR THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

The beautiful summer is really over. We see it in a thousand ways.

How bright the woodbine gleams upon fence-post and dead tree! One could fancy the summer had broken its heart, and poured

out its blood along the wayside. Asters are everywhere,—those dear frost flowers that come the last of all. Do they not seem like stars that light the tired summer to its sleep?

What a time this is for reverie. I wonder if any of *The Cheerful Letter* readers feel as I do about autumn. To me it is the time of summing up,—the time to take a mental account of stock. We have so many plans by and by as the winter draws nearer, we mean to do so much then; and the spring is so bright and full of hope, and the summer seems to hold the purpose and meaning of all. But these days,—these days of chill and sadness and unrest,—are they not days of reverie to you also? Looking out upon the gray lake and sky about my country home, from which I must soon fly before the approach of Jack Frost, and reviewing my life with one of those quick flashes of memory that come like a lightning gleam, showing so plainly for an instant all the way that we have trod, I find so much undone, so much that seems unsatisfactory, so much that seems doubtful, so little that seems just as it should be, that I am momentarily sad at heart. And then comes such a sweet, helpful thought that I must tell it to you as well as I can, because whatever I feel others must also feel,—of regret, of promise, of pain, and of peace.

The thought arose and clustered about the one word 'success."

What is success? As we ask the question, how many answers come to us! We picture lives that seem to us all success. We all have friends who have achieved success in many ways, while we have been plodding. Ah! success is the best of all. And a sigh escapes us. But wait a moment. What is success?

I knew a woman once whom the world calls a success. She stood in the foremost ranks of literature, a poetess, a centre of the literary society of a great Eastern city, brilliant, beautiful, successful. But, when I came to know her, I found her vain and foolish, and ambitious, jealous, bitter. Was this success?

Her poetry has never seemed beautiful to me since then.

We all know some rich friend who has risen to the highest round of social life; and have we not some time discovered that her heart bent beneath some inner sorrow that we have felt we never could bear? Is this success?

But suppose we do achieve worldly success, and suppose we are also good and sweet and true and happy. There have been successful women who have united all these in their lives. Look at some of the women poets of fifty years ago. What rare sweet women they were! And whatever of sweetness and beauty of character they attained belongs to them still, we must believe; but of their worldly successes who remembers aught?

They are but names to a few, and to the many even their names are unknown.

And the society beauties of a few years back,—how they are blotted out of all thought by those who hurry after them!

Our lives are as the autumn leaves, admired for an hour in all their brilliant beauty, then blown into oblivion by the breath of Time.

No matter how hard we toil, what we achieve, but a few years, and it will have been forgotten forever. A snap for ambition, then! Let us dream of something better than success.

Better than *such* success. But have we yet answered the question, What is success? I think not, for I would make success spiritual.

On our own souls we wear the marks of victory or defeat. These marks shall we carry with us into the beyond. You and I to-day amid our simple home duties may find the elements of success.

Out of the dish-washing and the darning, the baking and the cleaning, the care of little children, the worry of motherhood, we may weave for our souls a beautiful garment of success.

In character lies the only true success.

We may write the sweetest poem or the grandest book ever written, and yet have our lives a failure.

We can toil from dawn until sunset, and out of the ragged edges of our lives make a character that will answer the question of what is success.

Such is the thought that has come to me to-day, as I sit under the autumn skies. It did not come to me as I have given it to you, in lame words, but flashing down like

a burst of sunlight upon a gray landscape, and blessing like the perfume of some hidden flower.

Take the thought, then, and turn it for yourselves; and you will find it a blessed thought,—one to stop regret, and cheer our lack of faith in the great Power that surely leads the destinies of men.

EDITH WILLIS LINN.

Glenora, Yates Co., N.Y., Oct. 1, 1895.

I will send these directions for making children's toys. A doll house: this house is made from pasteboard, and can be made from thin boards. The size of the house depends on whether two or four rooms are made. If two, make each room 18 by 15 inches; if four rooms, make each one 15 by 13 inches, and from 22 to 24 inches in height. The house looks prettier with a sloping than a flat roof. The front, being open, needs a curtain to keep out the dust. Glass windows are pretty, and can be made by cutting out pieces. Have the glass a little larger than the opening, and fasten in by pasting strips of cloth over the edges. Silver paper and tinfoil can be used to represent windows by pasting it on the inside. Paste a strip of plain paper around the edges. Paper house inside and out. Put down the carpet. Any figured goods will make the carpet: pretty wall paper does well. Now put in the partitions. If pasteboard, cut out large openings and hang portières to tie back each side. If curtains are used, close them for a short distance from the top, leaving the lower part open and tied to each side so as to show the back rooms. The furniture is made from the colored perforated cardboard, embroidery silk being used for sewing the pieces and decorations. It is best to cut paper patterns, and cut out the cardboard by these. Make the table and chair legs double. Pasteboard furniture can be bought from most toy-dealers. T. B. Staynor, 209 Pine Street, Providence, R.I., has the cheapest furniture. There being only parlor, bed, and dining-room sets, kitchen furniture can be made from spools and pasteboard. A large spool, with a piece of pasteboard pasted on one end, makes a kitchen table. Spools with strips of pasteboard between will make a cupboard. A tin stove for the kitchen is pretty; but a square box, with feet, hearth, and pipe pasted in their proper places, the whole blackened, will do nicely. The small sets of tinware will help furnish the kitchen, and the tiny Britannia tea-sets help to set off the dining-room. Small spools could make pretty stools. Cans, baskets, and other articles can be made of tissue paper. From Mrs. John Anthony, Eureka, Illinois, Box 125.

TO THE SHUT-INS.

My dear Friends,—I have been very slow in writing to you how glad I was of your reply to my May letter; for I count it a most satisfactory answer, when so many of you applied to our *Cheerful Letter* committee for definite reading matter. Then, too, the little glimpse into your various lives was most pleasant to receive; and, whenever inclined, I assure you, your letters will always be welcome. Until the winter arrangements of our Women's Alliance are made, I shall, myself, gladly forward to you the magazines you have asked for,—*Arena*, *Century*, and the *New England*,—which, if received, will you kindly acknowledge?

In my last letter to you I wandered from Boston. To-day let us come back again, and spend a half-hour among its summer pleasures. In July came the Christian Endeavorers to our city,—a company of earnest men and women, largely young persons, banded together for a religious quickening. Their services in tents upon the Common and at various stations throughout the city were enthusiastically attended, and doubtless strengthened their aim of duty and faithfulness. But they had come also to enjoy famous Boston; and, between the hours of their meetings, this goodly company, gathered from all parts of the country, were to be seen closely inspecting every locality, every building conspicuous for its beauty, its use, or its history. Note-book in hand, nothing escaped their observation; and, I think, they must have gone back to their homes fairly steeped in Boston lore. I am sure they know far more about this capital than many a man or woman born within its limits. Quite possibly, some of you to whom I write may have had the good fortune to hear all these tales from their own lips. So I hardly venture more.

And, then, in August came the Knights

Templars; and you ask for what this organization stands, wherefore their festivity in our midst. To answer this would be a long, if not a tedious, story; but, to put it in a very little nutshell, I might tell you that its watchword, its key-note, is "sympathy with every good work," and you know that Boston is always hospitable to every such purpose. And so most gladly did she open her arms to the Knights Templars, as to the Christian Endeavorers. And what a hearty welcome this was to both! From house-top to cellar, on every insignificant as from every stately building, floated the tri-colored bunting. Having their respective insignia and mottoes, bands of music led the plumed Knights in procession through streets lined with the crowds of citizens; and a day to be long remembered was this of their reception,—the largest gathering of Knights Templars the world has ever seen. This organization is, as it were, the child of "Freemasonry"; and for its distinctions from that body I refer you to an article in the September number of the *New England*, which gives in details more than I could include in this letter, and might greatly interest you.

But there is still another interesting feature of this summer life in Boston, about which I want to tell you,—the Sunday preaching on the Common. Early in the season a few of our ministers conceived the plan of holding open-air services between the hours of five and six on Sunday afternoon. Each pledged himself to an address or sermon and prayer, with hymns to be sung by the congregation, led by a cornet. It has proved very interesting and successful throughout the season; and even as late as the date on which I write, September 8, an eager crowd gathered by hundreds to listen to Rev. Edward Everett Hale, as with all his wonted eloquence he preached to them upon genuine *manhood* and *womanhood*. His text was that verse in Genesis which you all know so well, "And God said, Let us make Man."

It is men *we* must make to-day, the preacher said, men *we* must have. Of lawyers, doctors, engineers, merchants, ministers, too, we have enough; but are they *men*, do they control their bodies, their passions, as well as their minds? Do our colleges send out from their walls men who are noble, pure, just, and honest, or do they graduate only those trained to some profession, able indeed to talk in public of all its technicalities, but are they equipped as *men* for grand, manly living? And, Dr. Hale continued fervently: "How, my friends, are we to correct all this? How are *we* to *make men?* I'll tell you,—and there is just *one* way. Each one of you, from this little urchin here to yonder full-grown man or woman, must come to know that he is a child of God, that God is helping him every minute to do his duty, to bear his burden, no matter what it is. This is religion. We do not want the machinery of religion: that does not make *men*. That turns out no genuine, noble life. 'Tis only faith in the living God which does this, which makes *men*."

Was not this a divine message to that listening throng? Is it any less so to you and to me? Yours truly,

EDEN.

Sept. 8, 1895.

THE STILL HOUR.

We ask for peace, O Lord,—
  Thy children ask thy peace,
Not what the world calls rest,—
  That toil and care should cease;
That through bright, sunny hours
  Calm life should fleet away,
And tranquil night should fade
  In smiling day.
It is not for such peace that we would pray.

We ask for peace, O Lord!
  Yet not to stand secure;
Girt round with iron pride,
  Contented to endure;
Crushing the gentle strings
  That human hearts should know;
Untouched by others' joy
  Or others' woe,—
Thou, O dear Lord, wilt never teach us so.

We ask thy peace, O Lord,
  Through storm and fear and strife,
To light and guide us on
  Through a long, struggling life
Where no success or gain
  May cheer the desperate fight,
Or nerve what the world calls
  Our wasted might,
Yet pressing through the darkness to the light.

It is thine own, O Lord,
Who toil while others sleep;
Who sow with loving care
What other hands shall reap.
They lean on thee, entranced
In calm and perfect rest.
Give us that peace, O Lord,
Divine and blest,
Thou keepest for those hearts who love thee best.

—*Adelaide A. Procter.*

The hour cometh, and now is, when Christian doctrine shall be redeemed from the Jewish and pagan errors which have clung to it, and so be brought back to the simplicity of Christ; when men shall no more be taught to be afraid of God. They will no more be taught that man is all corrupt and evil. They will be taught to see in every soul something good, something allied to God, some conscience, some heart, something of holy fire lingering under the ashes of vice and sin. The hour cometh, and now is, when men shall learn to respect human nature. The hour cometh, and now is, when they will look on the vicious and the criminal with pity, not contempt, and try to help them out of their evil; and when those who have been abandoned, and left without sympathy or brotherly aid, shall be sought out and taught and saved. Then the Christian Church, united by the holy spirit of humanity and brotherly love, will come together, and be at one, all working together in the great cause of human improvement. THAT HOUR COMETH, AND NOW IS.

The Christian Church has placed Christianity in the worship of God, who is over all and in us all. It has seen God above us,—not God in nature, not God in man's human soul. Its religion, therefore, has gone into worship, into churches, into Sundays. But the hour cometh, and now is, when Christianity is to be seen in the street, in the shop, in all human life, and God to be felt as "all in all."

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. If we say we are totally depraved, we deceive ourselves also. God has put into us a great deal that is good. He has given us reason, conscience, heart, freedom to choose good, power to resist evil. When he has done all this for us, to say that he has made us totally depraved is not humility, but ingratitude and impiety.—*Messages of Faith, Hope, and Love.*

THE EDITOR'S CORNER.

We are often asked what we especially need now to help us in our objects.

1. We need more offers of *good* popular periodicals, to be sent regularly after reading. These offers should all go to the *Book Club Secretary*, to be printed in "The Book Club," or to have the periodicals assigned by her to correspondents.

We will mention, as especially desirable, *Harper's Monthly*, *Scribner's*, the *Atlantic*, *Popular Science Monthly*, *New England Magazine*, the *Forum*, the *Arena*, the *Contemporary*, *Babyhood* (especially desirable for mothers of young children), the *Outlook*, the *Christian Register* (the last two are religious weeklies), *Harper's Young People*, the *Youth's Companion*.

2. Our libraries need more help. If all the members of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, or if all the subscribers to *The Cheerful Letter*, would give *one* good book each year, either to a library or an individual, we should do a great deal of good. Standard books are now obtained easily, often at very low prices. Our libraries have received comparatively few books. The library at Sidney, Texas, made an especial request for books of American history and biography, the young people in that region, especially young men and boys, asking eagerly for them.

Answers to Letters.

"Can you let me have Phillips Brooks's sermons?"

I have not offered them. It is not worth while to ask those who offer books for any books except those they offer. Send all such requests to the Book Club.

"Mr. —— sends me word of the death of his mother. I suppose you are the person to whom to send this information."

The *name* should have been given. We have fortunately received it from another source.

To Mrs. Nora Colley and others. Your letter should have gone to the Book Club

Secretary. It is of no use to send these general requests to the editor. (See directions.)

"Can you send me the *Physical Review?*"

Are you sure you do not mean the *Psychical Review?* There may be a *Physical Review*, and we have printed your request twice; but we have access to several lists of periodicals, and do not find this name.

Will some one send our Book Club Secretary the present address of Mrs. Mattie Alger, formerly of Boisé City, Idaho.

The address of Mrs. Dora Rhodes should have been printed *Crook*, Col., instead of *Cook*. (Mrs. Rhodes has changed her address again, we hear, but have not the last one at hand.)

A LETTER.

Perhaps all mothers are not aware of what charming little tea-sets can be made from acorns. Slip the nut out of the little shell at the top, which forms the saucer. With a sharp pen-knife cut off the top of the nut, and scoop out the meat. There is a cup; and, if the dainty little housewives insist upon having a handle, it can be supplied by a bent twig or straw slipped into a hole in the side. A tea-pot may be made in the same way, one straw representing the handle and another the spout, the "saucer" this time acting as cover. Covered dishes of various sizes may be made by putting saucers together.

There is nothing better in the way of home-made playthings that can be made without money than burdock burrs. If gathered when in blossom, they are clean, pretty, and admit of endless combinations. Next to the famous "notched blocks," there is no better material for the construction of houses, mill-wheels, fences, and gates. Really ornamental baskets, tables, chairs, and sofas are among the possibilities that a little practice in their manipulation will suggest.

Large advertising cards cut into strips and squares make interesting puzzles to be put together like "sliced animals."

Paper dolls may be made by cutting out heads from pictures, and pasting them on bodies cut from stiff paper, and then given to a child to be dressed. But the possibilities of cut paper are so great and so varied that they need a whole article to themselves.

A. L. W.

A GOOD BOOK.

[The book from which the following extract is made is called "Jasper; or, The Spoiled Child Recovered." It is by Jacob Abbott, and is one of the series called "The Harper Story Books," published by Harper Brothers, New York.]

(Mrs. Bleeker, Jasper's mother, is discussing methods of education with her father, Mr. Grant.)

"Don't you admit that it is better to govern a boy by reason than by force?" said Mrs. Bleeker. "*I* think it is, and I am going on that system. I don't want to have Jasper ever forced to do anything unless I can show him that it is reasonable and right."

"Yes," replied Mr. Grant, "I have often heard of young mothers that have evinced their extreme sagacity by adopting such a principle as that."

"Why, father," rejoined Mrs. Bleeker, "is not that a good principle?"

"No," said Mr. Grant, "it is a very bad principle."

"But, father, I am sure it is much better for children to be governed by reason than by force."

"You can try it," said her father, "but you will find that it won't do. You must govern this young gentleman by *authority*, or he will not be governed at all. He *has* no reason."

"No reason!" repeated Mrs. Bleeker, much surprised.

"No," replied Mr. Grant. That is, none that you can place the least reliance upon for the *government of his conduct.* A child for the first ten years of his life is all impulse, appetite, and passion. His judgment and his reasoning powers are *in embryo.* You cannot rely on them at all. It is his mother's reason that is to govern, and not his. It is for that very purpose that God and nature gave him a mother. You may depend upon it that, unless you govern him by authority, he will not be governed at all; and I am quite sure you will *not* govern him by authority, and so I think it highly probable that you will not govern him at all.

You will spoil him. You will be able to get along somehow or other for six or eight years; and then he will become so entirely uncontrollable that you cannot have him in the house, and you will have to send him to me."

Mrs. Bleeker laughed; for she supposed that her father was not half in earnest in what he said, and she asked him to wait and see.

"You will see," said she, "as soon as Jasper is able to understand me, how good a boy I will make of him. In the mean time, while he is too young to understand a single word, it is impossible to teach him to obey me. How are you to teach him, for instance, not to tear up his picture-books, when he can't understand anything you say to him?"

"Gertrude can teach him," replied Mr. Grant. . . .

When Mrs. Bleeker saw that the experiment had succeeded, she wondered a little at first; and then she said: "Yes, but I can't take so much time with him. The picture-books are not worth it."

Mrs. Bleeker, though in many respects a very sensible woman, could not see that the object of such discipline as this was not to save the picture-books, but to save the boy.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

There will be a meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange on Friday, December 6, at 10.30 A.M., at 25 Beacon Street, Boston.

Our Book Club department has grown so large that we shall ask of all who in the future write to us for books to send the name of some minister as a reference,—when possible, the minister of the church to which they belong.

We fear that some of our subscribers have the impression that by subscribing for *The Cheerful Letter* they will be sure to receive books. The Book Club has proved an attractive department of our paper; and many of our subscribers are interested in sending books to those who are unable otherwise to obtain them. But we engage only to keep the Book Club open for offers and requests, and that under certain conditions.

We remind all who send parcels or boxes with books, papers, etc., to correspondents or to libraries, that it is absolutely necessary to write at the same time to the receiver, enclosing the receipt which shows that the express or freight charges on the package have been paid. For want of this precaution, valuable packages have never been received. It is not probable that any of our *Cheerful Letter* friends send packages without prepaying them, but it is a common mistake of the express agents to charge the receiver for a prepaid package.

N.B.—PLEASE READ DIRECTIONS AT BEGINNING OF BOOK CLUB BEFORE WRITING FOR BOOKS.

The editor receives nearly every day notes which should go to the Book Club secretary (Mrs. Nichols), the treasurer (Miss Howe), or the secretary (Miss Langmaid). This greatly and needlessly increases her work. She would therefore request all readers of *The Cheerful Letter before* they address her to be kind enough to READ THE FOLLOWING

DIRECTIONS.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Louise Howe, 53 Linden Street, Brookline, Mass., or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

EDITOR OF "CHEERFUL LETTER,"—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals may be sent to the treasurer as above. The subscription is fifty cents a year.

Notice that requests for membership and for correspondents go to Miss Langmaid, our secretary; requests for books and offers of books, to Mrs. Nichols; and to Miss Clarke only articles for insertion in the paper (not Book Club matter). All such material should be written on *one side only* of the paper, and sent by the first of the month *before* that in which it is printed.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Louise Howe, as above. Please give full name and address. Many of our members take the paper, in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.

Will all subscribers or receivers of *The Cheerful Letter*, whose copy does not come regularly or comes not correctly addressed, be kind enough to notify Miss Louise Howe, as above.

Send all notices of *changes of address and requests for discontinuance* to Miss Howe. Please do not send these notices to the editor, as it causes delay in the correction.